

School Funding in Milford

How Milford's Schools Compare

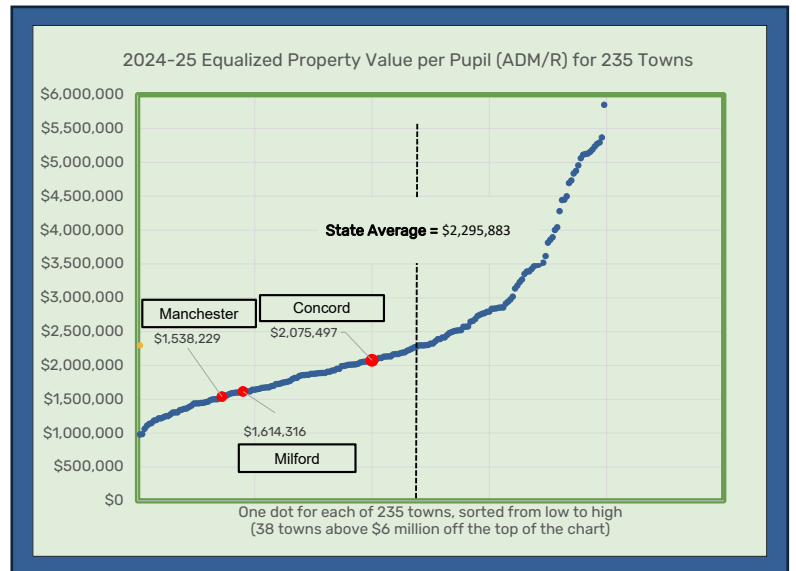
At a Glance:

- Milford's property-wealth capacity is 70% of the state average.
- Milford allocates 35% of its budget to Regular Instruction.
- Milford's Tax Rate is 132% of the state average
- Milford's special education costs are above the state average of \$31,000.

Fairness and Capacity

Fair school funding starts with what each town can reasonably raise per student. Equalized Property Value per Pupil (EQVP) measures that capacity—it reflects the amount of property wealth available for taxation, divided by the number of students. In towns with higher EQVP, the same school dollars can be raised with lower tax rates; in towns with lower EQVP, tax rates must be higher or schools settle for less.

In 2024, Milford's EQVP was \$1,614,316, about 70% of the statewide average of \$2,295,883. That means Milford had slightly below-average capacity to raise funds locally. To understand how this translates into actual school funding, Milford's equalized tax rate was 11.44 or 132% of the state average, with an Average Daily Membership (ADM/R) of 1,852. The student population included 376 eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL), 49 English Language Learners (ELL), and 378 receiving Special Education (SPED) services. In terms of funding, Milford received \$5,766 in adequacy aid from the state, while raising \$1,669 locally through the Statewide Education Property Tax (SWEPT). These figures together help illustrate both the town's fiscal capacity and the level of student need it must meet.



Spending by Type	Percentage	
	Milford	NH Average
Regular Instruction	35%	38%
Special Programs	16%	20%
Vocational Programs	4%	1%
Other Instructional Programs	2%	2%
Student Support Services	10%	8%
Instructional Support Staff	2%	4%
Administration	16%	11%
Plant Operations	9%	9%
Pupil Transportation	5%	5%
Food Services	1%	1%
Bond & Note Interest	0%	1%
Other Expenses	0%	0%
Total Expenses	100%	100%

Where the Money Goes

An efficient school budget puts the largest share of dollars where students learn. In 2023–24, New Hampshire's public school districts spent \$3.80 billion. Of that total, 38 percent supported regular classroom instruction and 20 percent supported special education. Administration accounted for 11 percent, building operations for 9 percent, and the remainder covered transportation, food services, and other functions.

Milford's spending mix directs a lower-than-average share to regular instruction and special programs, while allocating a larger portion to administration, vocational programs, and student support services.

Special Education

Special education funding is part of how schools support every student’s learning. These dollars pay for specialists, paraprofessionals, transportation, and coordination so classrooms can run on schedule, lessons are accessible, and teachers can maintain whole group instruction while individual support is provided as needed.

Function	Amount
Instruction	\$7,249,989
Instruction Related	\$4,359,782
Administration	\$760,057
Legal	\$11,340
Transportation	\$1,250,892
TOTAL	\$13,632,062

In 2023–24, Milford spent \$13,632,062 on special education. The district served 378 students with IEPs, averaging \$36,063 per student – above the state average of \$31,000.

These expenditures are in addition to general education costs and vary by student needs and service intensity from year to year.

Missed Opportunities

Despite strong advocacy and alignment with the ConVal court ruling, HB 550, HB 651, and HB 603 did not pass in the New Hampshire legislature, leaving significant funding gaps for local school districts. HB 550 would have increased base adequacy aid by 72.4%, raising the per-pupil amount from \$4,182 to \$7,356.01, but its failure meant towns missed out on critical foundational support—costing Milford approximately \$5,739,095 in lost adequacy aid. HB 651 proposed a parallel 72.4% increase across all funding categories, including special education, free & reduced lunch, and English language learners, which would have substantially boosted equity-based resources—resulting in an estimated \$6,973,224 in missed funding for Milford. HB 603 aimed to raise differentiated aid for special education students from \$2,100 to \$29,556 per pupil, a transformative change that could have brought Milford an additional \$10,195,707 to support high-need learners. The legislature’s inaction on these bills left towns without the funding necessary to meet student needs and constitutional adequacy standards.

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